have seen them as money transactions. We have obtruded our point of view and destroyed the whole legal system of the natives. It is through our materialization of those securities that we have lowered the native woman to a plaything of money and a piece of merchandise.

As for the two outgrowths of the native system, divorce and polygamy, neither is inherent in the legal system as such. They are only abuses which have taken root and which clash with the principles of the native law itself. By its nature, native marriage is also indissoluble, and polygamy has only been able to exist through a popular confusion between paternal and marital law.

4. Legal Power in the Clan

In Nkundo society all individuals do not have equal rights or powers, as in the Napoleonic law books, /154/ but the natural rights concerning people are still completely recognized. All value and power comes from God, through the ancestors. Those who are nearest to God are thus the highest in position, his first representatives. There is no question of absolutism or despotism. Just as the blood is divided among all clan members in a descending line, so also are authority and legal power. They are one as a legal entity in relation to the outside world; nevertheless, each member takes part and has a vote in the internal administration of justice, so that, when clan interests are discussed and dealt with, each member may sit in the place accorded to him and take part in decisions. In a legal sense there is, therefore, no question of a separate family council, which would assist the clan leader, but all decisions are made communally.

A single exception to this does exist, namely, that which gives the head of the nuclear family legal power over his wife and children, and then only with the acknowledgment and approval of the clan. Differences between autonomous clans are settled by the clans involved, a sort of international court of law where friendly clans may also be brought in as arbiters.

Such an arrangement made the court absolutely "paternal." The whole procedure was one of a reconciliatory character, which resorted to coercive measures only when necessary, and did its utmost to save the honor and the welfare of the involved clans, and to compensate for, to restore, and to prevent further offenses.